



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton  
National Park

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## Grand Teton National Park News Release

### Injured Climber Rescued from Garnet Canyon

Grand Teton National Park rangers evacuated an injured climber from the south fork of Garnet Canyon by helicopter on Friday morning, March 3. Jackson resident Ben Morley, age 23, sustained a hip injury late Thursday afternoon, March 2, after he slid on snow for approximately 500 feet and hit some exposed rocks near the 10,500 foot elevation. The accident occurred while Morley and two climbing companions were making a ski descent in the lower part of Southwest Couloir near the saddle between the Middle and South Teton.

One of Morley's climbing companions made a 911 call by cell phone to the Teton County Sheriff's Office, who then reported the incident to Teton Interagency Dispatch Center at 6 p.m. on Thursday evening. Park rangers immediately organized a rescue operation and quickly flew two rangers before darkness into the Meadows area of Garnet Canyon, using a Teton County contract helicopter.

From the Meadows, the two rangers skied up the south fork of Garnet Canyon to reach Morley near the bottom of the Southwest Couloir, assess his injuries, and provide emergency medical care. They also prepared Morley for spending the night in the backcountry until he could be evacuated by helicopter on Friday morning.

In the meantime, three additional rangers were ferried to the Taggart Lake moraine by snowmobiles with additional emergency and camping equipment required for an overnight bivouac. From the 7,000-foot-elevation moraine, rangers skied into the south fork of Garnet Canyon, gaining 3,000 feet in elevation and a distance of four miles while carrying packs loaded with the emergency gear. They reached the climbing party at 2:00 a.m.

At first light on Friday morning, rangers began to slowly lower Morley using a rope system. They eventually reached an area in the south fork of Garnet Canyon at 8,800 feet in elevation where the helicopter could safely land for evacuation. Morley was placed inside the helicopter at 9:45 a.m. and flown to a hanger at the Jackson Hole Airport. He was then transferred into a park ambulance and transported to St. John's Medical Center in Jackson, Wyoming for treatment of his injuries.

This marks the sixth major search and rescue operation in Grand Teton National Park this winter.

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